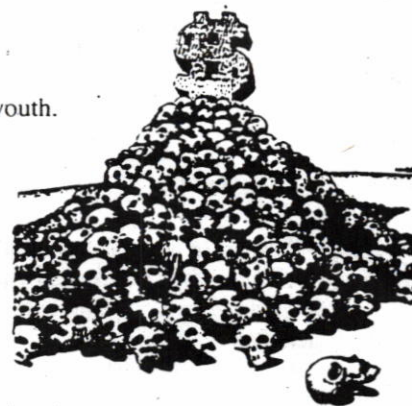


Private Prisons: The birth of a new industry whose main raw material is Black youth.

- Private prisons took in one billion dollars in 1997.
- In ten years, the private prison industry has grown thirty fold (2,730%), from owning 3,122 prison beds in 1987 to owning 85,201 beds at the end of 1996.
- A 35% annual growth rate for private prisons is projected, seven times the rate of publicly run prisons. By 20001, there could be 300,000 private prison beds.
- The stock value of the largest private prison firm, Corrections Corporation of America, has quadrupled in the last four years. Wall Street is betting a lot of money on this latest "boom" industry.



"This industry can grow in bad times as well as good because the crime rate goes up during recessions, and that means jail populations go up as well." – analyst for Equitable Securities Corp.

- To be profitable private prison firms must ensure that new facilities are not only built, but also filled. Empty beds cost money. An ample supply of raw material (prisoners) is needed to ensure long term growth.
- The profit driven prison has a built-in incentive for not releasing inmates, yet it determines when inmates should be disciplined or given "good time" – both factors considered by parole boards.
- In June 1995, a facility run by Esmor Correctional Services Corporation exploded in riots and was shut down. A government report found that Esmor had hired inexperienced staff, skimmed on repairs and guard salaries, and served inmates a substandard diet in order to generate greater profits.



Prisons and Politics: "I have heard people refer to the 'criminal countenance.' I never saw one. Any man or woman looks like a criminal behind bars." – Eugene Debs, 1927

The crime rate fluctuates both up and down, yet the incarceration rate skyrockets only upward. The increase in prisoners is not the result of an increase in crime, but rather the result of "the war on drugs", mandatory sentencing guidelines, the elimination of parole, and three strikes legislation. These are all political decisions driven by:

- Politicians capitalizing on the fear of crime (and the racism that often fuels it).
- Lobbying efforts by the unions and associations of the nearly 600,000 employees working in corrections.
- Lobbying efforts by prison construction firms, corporations utilizing prison labor, and especially corporations that own and operate private prisons. There is a direct financial interest in enlarging the police state, passing harsher laws with longer sentences, and locking up an ever-greater proportion of the population.



Today's Police State: The long leash is being replaced with chokechains.

All these people behind bars are an indication of what is taking place on our streets: an abundance of cops working diligently to create a police state.

- 800,000 checks for wants and warrants are processed *every day* by the Federal Crime Information Center (the FBI's computer database). This incredible figure gives some indication of the vast number of traffic stops, arrests and other detentions occurring around the clock.
- The FBI has over 83 million fingerprints on file.
- Clinton's Crime Control Bill put 100,000 more cops on the streets; his Anti-Terrorism Bill doubled the number of FBI agents.
- Cops. LAPD, and several other TV shows present raw, unmediated police propaganda every night.



Prisons, Profits, and Prejudice

Prisons and Prejudice: Prisons are the new plantations.

- In 1992 there were more Black men in prison (583,000) than in college (537,000). *
- One out of every four Black men will go to prison in his lifetime. *
- Black men make up 6% of the US population, yet nearly half of all prisoners are Black men.
- 42% of Black men aged 18-35 in Washington, DC were under some form of criminal justice control in 1992 (56% in Baltimore).

* These figures are for prisons only and do not include all the additional Black men in jails.



Prisons and Patriarchy: The concept of a cage is a patriarchal concept.

- 90% of women in prison are *single* mothers
- A conservative estimate of 250,000 children is separated from their mothers by jail and prison walls.
- 80% of female inmates report incomes of less than \$2000 a year. 92% report less than \$10,000 a year.



Prisons and Profits: Prison Labor = Slave Labor where your Employer is also your Imprisoner

- Since 1990 thirty states have legalized the once unacceptable practice of contracting out prison labor to private companies.
- Prison labor in public and private prisons netted \$1.8 billion in 1995.

Companies get:

- rent free space
- workers who never take vacations
- no strikes or union organizing
- the ability to lay workers off for weeks at a time, then start up on a day's notice
- the ability to break strikes on the outside using prison labor (as TWA did in 1986)
- a captive labor force... a very cheap captive labor force



Inmates get:

- minimum wage (or less) from which the state typically takes 80%
- the feeling that they are going to work in order to *pay the state to imprison them*

What other labor pool has no access to the media, labor organizers, or other community groups?



Prisons and Poverty: Prisons are the warehouses for the economically expendable.

- In 1990, 58% of people in prison were unemployed at the time of arrest.
- One study found that 53% of low-income defendants received prison sentences compared to only 26% of high-income defendants.
- Low-income defendants who are unable to post bail are stuck in jail as they await trial. They spend months, even years, behind bars without having been convicted of a crime.